

SERVICE CENTER UPDATE

Summer Sizzles at our Service Centers...

BROWARD SERVICE CENTER

District contributes \$1 million for Everglades Water Quality Improvements Project

On June 22, the Central Broward Water Control District received a matching grant of \$1 million from the South Florida Water Management District to complete a \$2.1 million Water Quality Improvements Project that will improve water quality in the western C-11 Canal Basin. The Central Broward Water Control District secondary canals are critically important to Everglades restoration because they discharge into the C-11 West Canal – which eventually discharge into Water Conservation Area 3A in the Everglades.



From left, State Representatives Ken Gottlieb and Mathew Meadow, Broward County Commissioner Kristin Jacobs, State Representative Mike Davis, SFWMD Broward Service Center Director Michael Jackson, and State Representative Ellyn Bogdanoff.

The new water control structures will redirect stormwater runoff from neighborhoods with limited storage to neighborhoods with excess storage capacity. The cooperative effort will reduce flood levels, improve water quality, increase aquifer recharge, and reduce the volume of runoff discharged by the secondary canals in the Central Broward Water Control District.

The greatest benefit of these “source control” structures will be to contain stormwater runoff from older areas that were developed before modern regulatory requirements for stormwater management systems. By holding back the runoff, pollutants will have time to settle out of the water column or be absorbed through biological processes.

OKEECHOBEE SERVICE CENTER

A taste of the District at the Florida Cattlemen Association's Convention

Cattle ranchers and families gained a rare treat, and learned a little something about water as well, at the Florida Cattlemen Association's annual convention and trade show held in Marco Island in mid-June. Okeechobee Service Center staff provided hands-on exhibits helping children construct and then devour “edible aquifers” and create their own “water cycle bracelets.” For the water-wise cattlemen, prizes were offered to anyone giving correct answers to questions from the “Environmental Wheel of Fortune.” No one went away empty handed or without learning something new. It was widely rumored that the District booth was even more popular than the beach at this annual event.



Bentz Overstreet of Zephyrhills takes pride in his edible aquifer at the SFWMD booth during the Florida Cattlemen Association's annual convention.

PALM BEACH SERVICE CENTER

Community Plant Day remembers Storm of '28 victims

More than 40 people joined together with the District on June 11 at a mass grave site in West Palm Beach to



West Palm Beach Mayor Lois Frankel (far right) joins students from Joseph Littles Charter School and other volunteers to plant flowers donated by the SFWMD in memory of the Storm of '28 victims.

plant trees and flowers in memory of the 674 black victims of the storm of 1928. Their singing, digging and planting was part of Community Plant Day, which kicked-off hurricane season. The District designed the layout and provided the flowers: 674 white spider lilies, dwarf holly, Fakahatchee grass and daisies. The City of West Palm Beach recorded the event for a special showing on its community page Web site.

West Palm Beach Mayor Lois Frankel; Palm Beach/West Palm Beach Rotary International; Connie Roy-Fisher Firm; T.R.U.T.H.S. Inc.; Mottos Tile and Marble Works; Palm Beach County Extension Services; Master Gardens; Joseph Littles Charter School; Northwood Community; Storm of '28 Memorial Park Coalition and the South Florida Water Management District were partners in the event.

MIAMI-DADE SERVICE CENTER

Flood mitigation projects get funding boost

Be on the lookout for oversized checks making their way around to more than 26 local governments in Miami-Dade County courtesy of the South Florida Water Management District and the Florida Legislature. The checks represent \$10 million in state assistance approved by the Florida Legislature and authorized by Governor Bush during the 2004 Legislative Session for local flood mitigation projects in Miami-Dade County.

The City of Homestead and the Village of Biscayne Park received their ceremonial checks totaling \$300,000, and will receive the real deal once their contracts take effect. Alvin B. Jackson, Jr., the District's deputy executive director for Government and Public Affairs, said, “Partnership programs such as this work in concert to address flood mitigation at a grass roots level with each local project contributing to the betterment of the overall water management system.”

MARTIN-ST. LUCIE SERVICE CENTER

Community programs protect estuary

Martin-St. Lucie Service Center staff continue to coordinate and organize Adopt-A-Drop/Florida Yards & Neighborhoods community meetings including field walkabouts, draft report on findings and recommendations and follow-up field meetings/inspections. They encourage adoption of environmental landscape maintenance by teaching residents the proper techniques to reduce the impact of stormwater runoff entering the St. Lucie estuary.

The Florida Yards & Neighborhoods program addresses a series of pollution problems by educating and training homeowners, green industry personnel and homeowner associations on the potential impacts associated with urban stormwater runoff. The Adopt-A-Drop program was started in 2000 by the St. Lucie River Initiative as a method of improving stormwater management at the residential neighborhood scale.

FLORIDA KEYS SERVICE CENTER

Water Conservation Campaign kicks off in Key West

A picnic at Bayview Park in early July kicked off the Water Conservation Campaign, an outreach campaign funded by the South Florida Water Management District and co-sponsored by the District, the City of Key West Department of Transportation and the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority.

From July 1 to July 4, the city offered free transportation on its public transportation buses, four of which are emblazoned with the campaign's message: “Florida's Water – It's Worth Saving.” In addition to the public bus messages, which wrap around the buses and



Florida Keys residents and visitors of all ages learn tips on how to conserve water at a picnic at Bayview Park.

include vibrant photographs that underscore the topic, the ongoing campaign includes conservation-themed artwork on billboards and bus shelters.

LOWER WEST COAST SERVICE CENTER

District leads Babcock Ranch negotiations

The South Florida Water Management District is leading negotiations to buy Babcock Ranch, a 92,000-acre tract in southwest Florida that is an outstanding area of natural resources and wildlife habitat. In April, Babcock agreed not to sell the property for six months while the District negotiates on behalf of government agencies, private organizations and foundations to buy the ranch.

The first steps are getting the land appraised and raising money for the purchase. The District has hired two appraisers to work on this project.

The nonprofit group Babcock Preservation Partnership Inc. announced July 8 that it will raise funds to augment federal, state and local government contributions to acquire the land.

ORLANDO SERVICE CENTER

Freddy takes a dip in Lake Toho

Freddy the Friendly Alligator poses along the lakeshore at Lake Tohopekaliga near Kissimmee, where the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, working in partnership with the South Florida Water Management District, has completed the construction phase of the Lake Toho Extreme Drawdown and Habitat Enhancement Project. With summer seasonal rains, Lake Toho should be back to normal levels by autumn. The \$8



Normally at this site, Freddy would be standing in nearly 6 feet of water. So it's up to Mother Nature to bring on the summer rain to refill the lake.

million project removed more than 8 million cubic yards of rotting vegetation, or muck, which degrades the fish and wildlife habitat in Lake Toho's world-class bass fishery.